

The Anti-Slavery Reporter

and

Aborigines' Friend.

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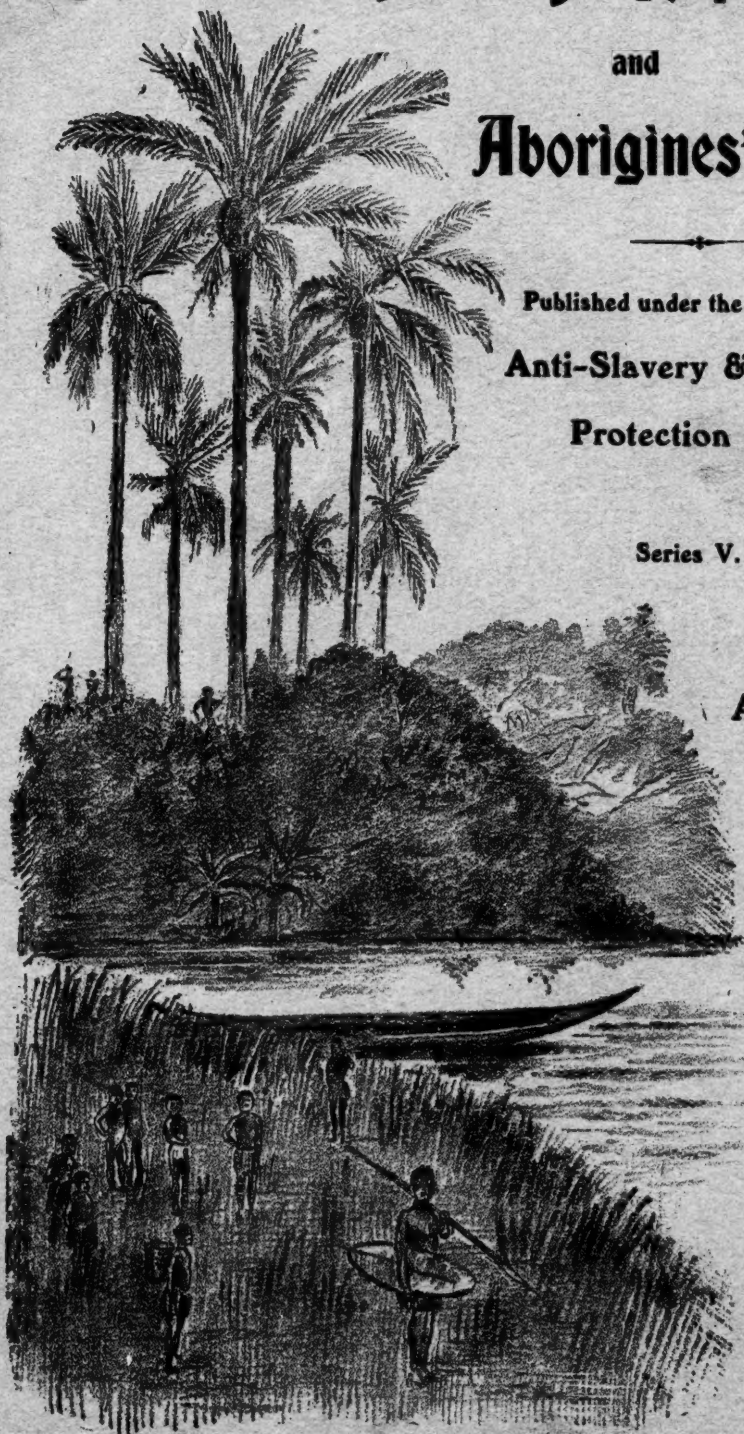
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Anti-Slavery Reporter and Aborigines' Friend.

APRIL, 1910.

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Portuguese Slave Labour.

THE AMERICAN CAMPAIGN.

By JOSEPH BURTT.

MRS. BURTT and I arrived in Liverpool on the 28th of February, after a successful tour of four months in the eastern cities of the United States, on behalf of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, to awaken interest in America in the cause of the enslaved coloured labour employed on the cocoa plantations of Portuguese West Africa.

We reached Boston on September 28th, and were interviewed by Press reporters on landing, with the result that photographs and headlines announced to the public our arrival and our mission.

The other cities visited were New York, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago and Washington. In all over sixty addresses were given, reaching large numbers of persons, including church congregations, Monday morning conferences of clergy, clubs, a large commercial association, a labour federation, benevolent and philanthropic societies, colleges and schools.

A far wider circle was reached by the Press, in which about 200 articles have appeared, circulating all over the States, and reaching Canada, and coming before millions of readers. One of the first journals to champion the cause was *Leslie's Weekly*, a prominent New York magazine, which, before our arrival, had written to some of the large cocoa firms asking their attitude as to slave-grown cocoa. This magazine published four illustrated articles; and was followed by other influential papers, such as *Collier's Weekly*, *The Outlook*, *Literary Digest*, and scores of daily papers, among which were the *Herald*, *Times*, and *American* of New York.

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The first large public meeting of our tour was held at the Warren Avenue Baptist Chapel, Boston, where a congregation of 1,200 people listened with deep interest and contributed \$100 to the funds.

Through a personal introduction from the Bishop of Hereford, I was invited by Bishop Lawrence, of Massachusetts, to lunch at a diocesan gathering, where an address was given to 80 Episcopal clergy, and on the same day Mrs. Burt and myself addressed a gathering of Baptist ministers. These Monday morning conferences of clergy are influential, and by attending them I was able to appeal personally and bring our literature before the heads of a large number of churches.

A lantern lecture was given at the large and influential Boston City Club of business and professional men, and Mrs. Burt and myself lunched with and addressed the Twentieth Century Club in the same city. This concluded our series of nine meetings in Boston.

During the first week we spent in New York, the Rev. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, the author and lecturer, permitted me to address his Sunday evening congregation of 800 people at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, on the sixty-second anniversary of Henry Ward Beecher's first sermon to a church which afterwards became famous for its interest in the cause of anti-slavery. On the same day I spoke to 100 labour representatives at Brooklyn.

Our ten meetings in New York also included the diocesan Social Service Guild, which forwarded a resolution to the Secretary of State; addresses to 1,500 young students at Erasmus Hall; 600 students at the Pratt Technical Institute; a conference with the National Consumers' League; an address to about a hundred Methodist Episcopal clergy; and two addresses to a total of nearly 200 students at Columbia University.

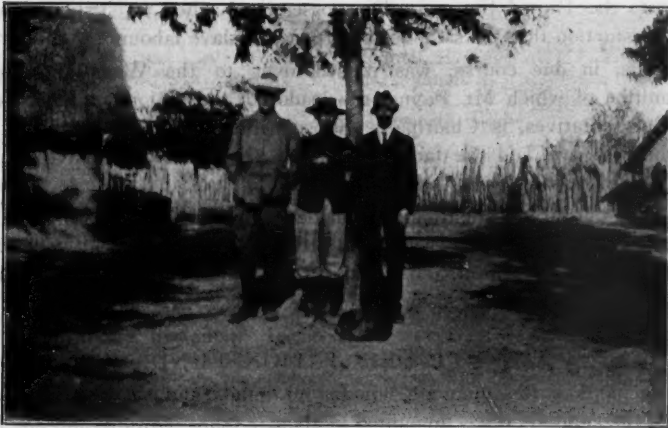
On the 16th of October we left New York for Philadelphia, and spent a week in the district, where most of the gatherings addressed were connected with the Society of Friends, and in no instance exceeded 400 in number. A gathering of about 160 students at Haverford College; a lantern lecture in Moorestown; and an address to 350 pupils at West Town School, were among the most interesting of the nine meetings held in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia.

The following week was spent at Baltimore, where, though the subject of S. Thomé slavery was dealt with by the leading daily papers, our meetings were small. However, an opportunity of circulating our literature very widely was given by a lantern lecture before the Baltimore Yearly Meeting of Hicksite Friends, and introduced the subject to a large circle of thoughtful people.

We returned to New York on October 30th, and ten days were occupied in interviewing cocoa manufacturers and preparing matter for the Press.

Owing to the necessity of my being called as a witness in the *Cadbury v. Standard* libel action, I was obliged to be away from America for a month and did not return till December 12th. A fortnight was then spent in the neighbourhood of New York, during which I was engaged in interviewing various cocoa makers in the hope of obtaining concerted action on the part of the firms, and in preparing articles and bringing the matter before the Press, which appeared to be the most effective manner of reaching the American public.

On January 8th we arrived in Chicago, where we were entertained by Mrs. Mary Wilmarth, President of the Illinois Consumers' League. During our twelve days' stay, thirteen addresses were given at Clubs, Churches and Institutes, including a lantern lecture at Hull House Settlement and a speech



MR. BURTT AND DR. HORTON IN ANGOLA.

at a luncheon at the City Club. Owing to the kindness of the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee of the Commercial Association of Chicago, I was invited to a lunch and addressed nearly 200 business and professional men. This speech was reported verbatim in *Chicago Commerce*.

The Press of Chicago treated the question of S. Thomé slavery very fully, and one large paper, *The Inter-Ocean*, had an illustrated Sunday article.

On January 21st we left Chicago, arriving at Washington the next day. Although the object of our visit was mainly political, some fifteen gatherings were addressed, including an Adult Sunday School of 400 people.

As the subject had met with such warm support in the various cities we had visited, it was hoped that the United States Government might be induced to take some steps to bring about reform in Portuguese West Africa. For this purpose I called on a number of politicians, including

Mr. Secretary Knox, Senator Root, and others, and was introduced by the Hon. W. W. Cocks (Member from New York) to the President, Mr. Taft.

Mr. Taft entered very sympathetically into the position, and suggested that he might issue a proclamation forbidding the entry of slave grown cocoa into the States until an official investigation was made.

As a result of this Mr. Cocks introduced the following

JOINT RESOLUTION

Authorising the President to prevent the entry into the United States of slave-made cocoa.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President be, and he hereby is, authorised to forbid by proclamation the entry of cocoa into the United States or her possessions, when it is shown to his satisfaction that the same is the product of slave labour.

This, in due course, was passed over to the Ways and Means Committee of which Mr. Payne, the leader of the majority in the House of Representatives, is Chairman. Subsequently, I made a special visit to Washington, and laid the facts before this Committee, but have not yet received information as to their report.

If an official investigation were made by the United States of America, which is the largest cocoa-consuming country in the world, it would be a strong incentive to reform, and would also be a most encouraging conclusion to our visit to America.

BURTT DEPUTATION FUND.

THE accounts of this fund are now in our hands, and show that the total cost of the deputation has amounted to about £550. Towards this we have received contributions as set forth below, leaving a deficiency of nearly £80 which has to be met by the Society. It is hoped, now that Mr. Burtt has returned from so successful a journey, which seems likely to be fruitful in good results for the enslaved labourers, that further donations may be received towards defraying the cost. We appeal to our readers to help us to meet this deficiency; all gifts will be gratefully received at the office of the Society.

CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVED IN ENGLAND.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Gooch, G. P.	5	0	0	Anonymous (A. J.)	1	0	0
"S."	50	0	0	Anonymous	0	2	0
Wadsworth, J. A.	0	2	0	Marriage Allen, Mrs.	10	0	0
Sholl, Ruiter	0	10	6	Nemo, Captain	0	2	0
Potter, Ven. Archdeacon				Holinden, Miss A.	0	10	0
Beresford	2	2	0	Boyle, C.	1	1	0
Boswell-Stone, Miss E.	0	2	6	Kemball, Brig.-General S. H.	1	0	0
Scott, Mrs. M. M.	1	1	0	Allen, Mrs. Charles H.	2	2	0
"Sympathy," Worthing	1	0	0	Pascall, James	5	0	0

Review.

LABOUR IN PORTUGUESE WEST AFRICA.

BY W. A. CADBURY.*

THE publication of this very valuable addition to our knowledge of the labour system of Angola and the islands of San Thomé and Príncipe was delayed owing to the recent libel action in the Courts. Mr. Cadbury wrote his book on his return from Africa over a year ago, and a small edition was published for private distribution; a preface to the present edition and an added chapter bring the information down to the end of last year.

Our readers are aware of the general course of events which led Mr. W. A. Cadbury to decide on personally visiting the cocoa islands and Angola in 1908-9. No one can accuse him of having formed a hasty judgment on the question of the labour methods employed; his investigations have been throughout pursued with a genuine desire to get at the truth and to avoid unjust condemnation of the Portuguese and unnecessarily wounding their susceptibilities. To this end he has acted with care and patience, which give all the greater weight to the decision deliberately arrived at by the cocoa firms in March 1909, as the result of Mr. Cadbury's investigation, to make no further purchases of the San Thomé cocoa.

Mr. Cadbury describes his visit to San Thomé, and divides his remarks on points connected with the labour system under a number of different headings, which make his book valuable for reference. Turning to the chapter headed "Conclusions," in which he sums up his observations, we find that he considers the system of obtaining and treating the labour for the cocoa industry indefensible, on account of the recruiting conditions, the inadequate form of contract, the excessive mortality among the labourers on the islands and the repatriation laws, which are "constructed in a manner not calculated to facilitate repatriation." In the recruiting system lies the root of the evil, and this, up to the issue of the regulations of last year, "remains absolutely unchanged." In the new code issued in July, 1909, after the report of Captain Paula Cid had been received, several clauses relate to recruitment in Angola, by which *inter alia* the province is divided into "zones," and it is laid down that the agents must be licensed Portuguese citizens, knowing the language of the country. We note that these regulations are somewhat severely criticised by a Lisbon newspaper, the *Economista*, as confusing and possibly illusive.

In the preface to the present edition Mr. Cadbury describes the situation as being not unlike that in the Southern States during the early nineteenth century:

"On the one hand, a brutal system of capture and supply of slave labour by a licensed agent; on the other hand, a fairly humane treatment on some

* London: Geo. Routledge & Sons, Ltd.

of the best estates, free labourers from Cape Verde and Cabinda working side by side with Angola slaves under precisely similar conditions. The Angola native, however, has up to recently never been repatriated, and his condition is that of a slave."

Mr. Cadbury found no little difficulty in obtaining any exact statistics such as he desired of the population, mortality, birth-rate and repatriation: the Acting Curador at San Thomé declined to give figures, and it could only be inferred that he was ashamed of the state of things, or that he wished to render the inquiry abortive. The numbers of *serviçais* from Angola (the Benguella and Lunda provinces of which have supplied the bulk of the labourers for the plantations for many years) have been ascertained from various sources, such as British Consular reports, the Official Bulletin of San Thomé, etc., and reached as many as 3,924 for eight months only of 1908—a large increase on the previous year, and Mr. Cadbury thinks it is a safe estimate to put the average number of men and women shipped yearly at nearly 4,000 besides children. The total *serviçal* population of the two islands can only be estimated from the lists compiled by the estates when applying for labourers, and is put by Mr. Cadbury at an outside figure of 37,831. The birth rate on the estates is very small, and only on a very few of them exceeds the death rate. The total mortality again can only be estimated, but as 4,000 labourers come from Angola and do not return, this shows a death rate of over 100 per thousand on the estimated population, a figure which is supported by actual figures on some large estates. In other words:—

"In San Thomé, without a constant stream of emigration, the entire *serviçal* population from Angola would disappear in ten years."

In Principe Island the mortality is even higher. What is the cause of these high death rates? It cannot be the climate, for both the degraded native race of the island and the more virile "Angolares" are increasing steadily; it is not want of food or clothing, for Mr. Cadbury found little or nothing to complain of on the estates in this respect, although the close



SOUTHERN ANGOLA NATIVE WOMAN.

quarters in which the labourers live on some of the estates must be prejudicial to health, as well as the entire absence of any sanitation. The reason assigned by Mr. Cadbury agrees with that given by Mr. Nevinson and other inquirers :

"One is compelled to believe that the high death rate is largely due to the circumstances under which the labour is obtained and the mental and physical condition of the contracted labourer . . . The first few months on the roça are the most deadly, and some new arrivals never recover from their low state of body and mind."

So high a death rate, which means, on the large estates at least, one funeral every week, must, as Mr. Cadbury points out, re-act directly on the spirits and general health of a sensitive and superstitious negro people. One of the greatest evils of the system is lack of repatriation. Mr. Cadbury thinks that in some cases the explanation of the Government and planters holds good, that the *serviçal*, satisfied with his condition in San Thomé, and remembering the life of hazard in his own country, prefers the former to freedom ; but this does not fully explain the utter failure of the law providing for repatriation at the end of the five years' contract, in spite of which, up to the end of 1908, practically no Angola labourer has ever returned. Mr. Cadbury shows that the expense of replacing the old labourers by new importations is great, and cannot but weigh with the manager of a plantation, especially as the new labourer often sickens in his first months of service. Re-contracting, on the other hand, is simple, and saves considerable trouble as well as cost. Unable himself to be present at the re-contracting ceremony, it was thus described to him by one who was present on such an occasion, when—

"About fifty men and women were drawn up in line before the estate manager, the Curador and two policemen ; there was no interpreter. The Curador in Portuguese asked, 'Are you content with your master?' 'Do you wish to enter into a further contract?' A few replied 'Yes, sir,' automatically, the majority said nothing, and the occasion was over."

Some of the estate managers admit the evils of the system, and are anxious that repatriation should be made a reality. During the time that Mr. Cadbury was in Africa the first cases of repatriation were recorded, in November and December, 1908 ; but he found that these labourers had not received the amount legally due to them for repatriation money, that there was no guarantee for their safety on the long journey home, and that in no case were children returned with their parents.

The paramount necessities of the situation are, in Mr. Cadbury's opinion :—

1. The sweeping away of irresponsible recruiting agencies on the mainland and the substitution of a proper system.
2. Compliance with the existing law as to freedom of contract.

3. Modifications in the terms of service, which are in excess of the general practice.
4. The re-modelling of the re-contracting system.
5. Guarantees of safe and easy repatriation of the labourer.

In the added chapter at the end of the book, which brings Mr. Cadbury's story down to November last, he tells us that, while recruiting in Angola was officially said to be suspended in July, 1909, 100 to 150 Angola *serviçaes* were landed at San Thomé on August 19th from the *Ambaca*. These labourers had doubtless been recruited before the issue of the decree, but the fact shows, as Mr. Cadbury says, the futility of mere regulations.



SHACKLE FOR FEMALE SLAVE'S NECK AND HANDS, AS USED IN ANGOLA.

A Loanda newspaper, called the *Voz de Angola*, which has distinguished itself by fearless criticism of the system, wrote in reference to the regulations of last year as follows:—

"Not only are they (the workers) enslaved to an unending work, under the most repugnant methods of exploitation, but also the children they now have and those that will be born to them. The draw-net in which they are caught has no meshes through which the young ones may escape! . . . There are no children, no parents, no law of succession, no social or human rights; there is nothing. . . . Conscience, free-will, dignity, social rights—these are all prerogatives of *people*, but not of native *serviçaes*."

Of the experiment of bringing labourers from Mozambique, Mr. Cadbury writes hopefully. So far they come on contract for one year only, and there is no doubt that they understand the terms under which they are brought. Another hopeful feature is that there are those in Portugal

who hate the system, and are anxious to bring it to an end. The well-known Lisbon newspaper, *O Seculo*, published last September an account of the National Labour Congress of the Southern Region of Portugal, in which a report was read containing the following passage:—"That the Portuguese Government in the occupation of the African colonies should substitute for the system of armed penetration that of peace, as being more worthy of the sympathy of the people subjected and the approval of the most cultured nations." Sir. Batalha, who read the report, affirmed that at the present time slavery is still exercised in Africa. He showed that the labour contracts are a deception, and that the so-called "redemption" of the labourers is nothing but slavery.

Mr. Cadbury's book, compiled with so much care, on his own personal observations, cannot but enlighten public opinion both here and in Portugal, where it has been translated and circulated; and all friends of the African races must agree with him in his hope that Portugal will soon take the only steps worthy of a civilized Power, and put an end to the existing system of trading in human beings.

Mr. J. Burt's Report to the Cocoa Firms in 1907, forms of Angola Labour Contract, regulations for Mozambique labourers, and other statements bearing on the question, are published as appendices to the volume.

Rubber Slavery in South America.

FROM recent issues of *Truth* we learn that the reports of the cruelties on the Putumayo have attracted attention and excited comment in some newspapers in Peru. A leading Lima journal, *El Comercio*, publishes a letter reporting grave charges of cruelty to the natives employed by the "gum-workers" on the Putumayo. The editor remarks that though there may be some exaggeration in the matter it would be expedient for the Government to make enquiry in order to see what grounds there are for the charges. Again, an English illustrated magazine published in Lima, *Peru To-day*, speaks of "the abuses of some officials and private companies in the remote districts toward the helpless Indians and natives of the vast rubber country," which, it is said, the Government of Peru is making every effort to correct. On account of "the vastness of its often impenetrable territory," the Government, like its neighbours, "finds it difficult to exercise an effectual control." The paragraph goes on to say that the President is keenly alive to the need of reform, and while the recent accounts of oppression in the camps of the Peruvian Amazon Company are "grossly exaggerated and circulated by blackmailers," he feels that they should not, and must not, exist. To this end—

"The proper sort of officials are being placed in control of the distant regions, and a warning has been sent out to those engaged in the gathering

of rubber. A decree has also been issued recently forbidding the employment of the natives against their will and without compensation on roads or public works."

This statement admitting abuses is important, and shows an advance on the position taken up some months ago, when, as *Truth* points out, the Peruvian Legation denied everything. The Chargé d'Affaires then wrote to that journal as follows:—

"This Legation categorically denies that the acts you describe, and which are severely punished by our laws, could have taken place without the knowledge of my Government on the Putumayo River, where Peru has authorities appointed direct by the Supreme Government, and where a strong military garrison is likewise maintained."

Peru To-day also speaks of the formation of a society for the protection of aborigines. We hope to get further information about this reported new society.

We learn also from *Truth* that the annual meeting of the Peruvian Amazon Company was held early in the year, when the chairman expressed the disbelief of the Board in the allegations which had been made, on the strange ground that the managing director on the spot, Mr. Arana, denied the allegations! This gentleman was one of the vendors of the business (which he founded) to the Company and is largely responsible for the system, consequently his evidence is valueless. The chairman also quoted and referred to the evidence of a representative of the auditors, who had recently visited the country and saw nothing wrong. It has already been shown by Mr. Hardenburg and others, that it is quite possible to travel through this remote district for weeks without finding out the ill-treatment of the natives. It was stated by the chairman that Mr. Hardenburg's allegations took this Board by surprise—an utterly damaging admission, for the system has been in operation many years.

Their ignorance is sufficient condemnation. As *Truth* forcibly expresses it:—

"When the Peruvian Amazon Company took over the business of Arana Brothers, the directors of the Company must have known, like the rest of mankind, the sort of consequences that follow when the business of rubber-collecting beyond the outskirts of civilisation is conducted by the forced labour of natives left to the mercy of gangs of irresponsible slave-drivers. Was it not the first duty of an English Board—even a Board containing, as this one does, as many as three Englishmen—to satisfy themselves that the conditions which have made the name of the Congo a by-word were not producing precisely similar results on the Amazon? What has this Board done in that direction? By its own confession, nothing."

Even when informed of the charges, the directors made not the slightest effort to ascertain by inquiry if there was any ground for them; they were satisfied simply to deny them and disclaim responsibility. It is now,

however, vaguely stated in the chairman's speech to the shareholders, that "a gentleman known to some of the directors" is probably to go out to the Amazon to investigate, as their confidential representative, and report fully. While welcoming this tardy admission of some amount of responsibility, we cannot have much confidence in an inquiry made under such circumstances.

Parliamentary.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *March 1st, 1910.*

ENGLISH PERUVIAN AMAZON COMPANY.

Mr. WEDGWOOD asked the Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether he had yet received any report as to the alleged cruelties committed under the control of the English Peruvian Amazon Company; and whether the United States Government had also supplied His Majesty's Government with information on this matter, and to what effect.

Sir E. GREY: No further reports on the subject are expected, nor has any information been received from the United States Government since the date of my answer to Mr. Hart Davies on November 24th last. The information in my possession gives rise to a presumption that abuses have occurred. I have brought the charges to the notice of the Company, who deny that they have any foundation and repudiate all responsibility. In these circumstances I have suggested to them that a commission of inquiry should be sent to the Putumayo.

Mr. WEDGWOOD: May I ask how long ago that suggestion was made, and whether there is any chance of it being accepted?

Sir E. GREY: I cannot answer the last part, because the matter rests with the Company. If the hon. member will give me notice I shall be glad to inquire how long ago it was that the suggestion was made.

March 15th.

Mr. WEDGWOOD asked the Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether he had approached the Peruvian Government with reference to the abuses in the Putumayo, and what steps were actually being taken by Peru.

Mr. MCKINNON WOOD, who replied, said: We have not yet made representations to the Peruvian Government. We have been awaiting the result of a communication which we made to the Government of the United States on the subject. We understand the Peruvian Government have of their own accord instituted an inquiry into the allegations of cruelty, and, if there should be any foundation for them, will adopt remedial measures.

March 22nd.

SLAVE-GROWN COCOA.

Mr. CATHCART WASON asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the decree prohibiting the recruitment of native labourers in the province of Angola for labour in the cocoa plantations of San Thomé and Principe is still in force; and if he can say whether the cocoa planters have recently engaged a large number of free labourers from Mozambique for work in the plantations?

Mr. MCKINNON WOOD: The decree of 22nd November, 1909, prohibited recruiting in Angola until February 1st last. I understand that it was decided that recruiting should not be resumed until the new regulations were properly introduced. It is at first only to be allowed in the districts of Quillenges, Bailundo, and Jinga de Ambaca.

With regard to the second part of the question, recruiting of labourers from Mozambique has been proceeding for some months, but I am not aware whether a large number of labourers have been engaged recently. I am asking for reports from the Consul to get the latest information on both these points.

Parliamentary Committee.

A MEETING was held at the House of Commons on March 16th to consider the question of forming a Committee of Members of Parliament interested in the work of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, who would use their influence, in co-operation with the Society, for the promotion of the objects at which it aims. Sir Charles Dilke presided; and the Members present included Sir George White, Mr. J. C. Wason, Mr. H. J. Wilson, Mr. J. W. Wilson, Mr. F. Verney, Mr. J. Wedgwood, Mr. T. E. Harvey, Mr. C. Roden Buxton, Mr. Aneurin Williams, Mr. Joseph King, Mr. A. Rowntree, and Mr. Noel Buxton, who is acting as convener of the Committee. Other Members who expressed willingness to join the group were Sir W. J. Crossley, Sir Albert Spicer, Sir W. J. Collins, and Mr. W. H. Cowan. The President and several members of the Society's Committee also attended the meeting.

After a short statement by the Secretary as to the more urgent questions now before the Society, it was resolved to form a Parliamentary Committee, as suggested, to meet periodically at the House.

Mr. H. W. Nevinson then spoke on his experiences of the Portuguese labour system in West Africa; and Mr. Joseph Burtt gave a report of his recent journey to the United States, as a deputation from the Society, and of his interview with President Taft.

The charges of cruelty on the Putumayo River in Peru were then

discussed, on which questions have been asked in the House, and it was stated that the Foreign Office has been in communication with the Peruvian Amazon Company, and is prepared to support the United States Government in any action which they may take against the abuses.

It was resolved that Sir C. Dilke and Mr. J. W. Wilson, M.P., should be asked to see Sir E. Grey on these subjects.

Questions affecting the Colonial Office, including reported ill-treatment of native labourers in North-West Rhodesia and the interests of natives in Southern Nigeria, were also discussed, on which it was decided to seek information from the Under-Secretary for the Colonies.

As a result of the conference, Sir Charles Dilke had a private interview with Sir Edward Grey, who intimated that, having been informed by the Portuguese Government that the recruiting of labourers for the cocoa islands had been suspended till February and was to be resumed under improved conditions, he was making inquiry on the spot and would direct investigation into the extent of the labour imported from Mozambique and the system under which the labourers were brought to the islands.

The Congo Question.

THE debates in the Belgian Chamber on the Congo Budget for 1910 produced some interesting speeches from M. Vandervelde and other opponents of the Government policy, as well as from the Colonial Minister in defence of it. The Government was attacked by M. Tibbaut and others for having sacrificed Belgian interests to British concessionaires, but M. Vandervelde declared that the Katanga conventions were a secondary question, while the rights of the natives were a question of humanity of the first importance for the honour of Belgium. Denouncing the atrocities committed under the domain system, the Socialist leader paid a warm and notable tribute to the self-sacrificing labours of Mr. Morel, which made a considerable impression. Forced labour, he said, still partially existed, *e.g.*, in the Abir and Mongalla districts, and from the Budget figures it was evident that the proposed reforms had not counted as a factor in its preparation. Belgium ought to be candidly told that expenditure would be necessary. M. Vandervelde raised the question of the sort of labour to be employed for the vast State plantations adumbrated in the reform scheme, and extracted a pledge from M. Renkin that there would be no recourse to forced labour. In the Abir and Mongalla districts the Minister said that the labour taxes would be suspended during 1910, but the situation was complicated by the conventional rights of concessionaire companies. On February 16th the Budget was passed by seventy-nine votes to forty. It has been pointed out that it upholds all the abuses of the old régime, and

half of the revenue on which it rests is provided from the old source—the proceeds of forced native labour in the collection of rubber and copal. There is no recognition of native communal rights to land, and no grant in aid for Congo Administration from the Belgian Exchequer. No guarantee is given for a reversal of the system such as was referred to by the British Foreign Secretary in February, 1908, as a condition precedent to the transfer of the Congo territory. On the contrary, M. Renkin plainly declared in the Belgian House, on February 24th last, that *foreign intervention in the Congo would never be tolerated*, nor that of private societies.

In the debate which took place on the subject in the House of Commons on March 10th, Sir Edward Grey declared that his attitude was "one of expectancy, of suspense, but still of belief that things are moving in the right direction." He still speaks of withholding British recognition of annexation until definite guarantees are received in the form of results.

"We will not," he said, "recognise, or ask the House to recognise, the annexation until we are in a position to lay before the House reports from our own Consuls to show that improvements have taken place, and that the condition of the natives and of our own treaty rights with regard to trade are in a satisfactory position."

In reply to Sir George White's question why the Foreign Office had not insisted on the proper and legitimate conditions which he had laid down, the Foreign Secretary said that what he had in mind was the possibility of the Belgian Government taking over the Congo on terms which would preclude its dealing freely with its future administration, and there were no such restrictions. He repeats the plea that the Government could not have prevented annexation without being "prepared to resort to forcible measures," in other words by "belligerent action." The reform proposals, though not completely satisfactory, in Sir E. Grey's opinion improve the prospect. The Budget allows for some falling-off in the revenue. The situation is less hopeless, and we have done more than other nations who are as responsible as we are. We cannot go beyond diplomatic action. This does not appear to be a very strong or successful defence of the Government's negative policy in regard to the Congo, and is not calculated to bring about a change of front on the part of Belgium. The outlook is not encouraging to Congo reformers.

We note that German opinion, as represented by Consul Vohsen, writing in the *Koloniale Rundschau*, is to the effect that the proposed reforms cannot be taken seriously, Belgium being a partner in the concessionary companies, and directly interested in the maintenance of the régime. An instructive example of the character of the promises made by the Belgian Government was seen in January, when M. Renkin announced that the forced labour system would be abandoned at once, and the announcement was said to have "produced an excellent impression" in

Brussels. A few days later *The Times* correspondent, who sent the message, explained that the measure only applied to works of public utility, and that there was "at present no question of the abolition of forced labour in other enterprises."

Slavery and Peonage in Mexico.

A SERIES of articles on the inhuman conditions of slave labour prevailing in various parts of Mexico, so shocking as to be almost incredible, has been appearing in *The American Magazine* for October last and the following months, under the title of "Barbarous Mexico," by Mr. J. K. Turner, who visited the country in the autumn of 1908.

According to the Mexican Constitution :—

"Slaves who set foot upon the national territory recover, by that act alone, their liberty.

"No one shall be compelled to do personal work without just compensation and without his full consent. The State shall not permit any contract, covenant, or agreement to be carried out having for its object the abridgement, loss, or irrevocable sacrifice of the liberty of a man."

Such is the law. Mr. Turner, in these articles, sets forth how completely and ruthlessly it is violated.

The first article relates to the vast henequen (sisal hemp) plantations of Yucatan, a peninsula forming an elbow of Central America, which extends in a north-easterly direction, and covers an area of some 80,000 square miles. Here the Government policy renders slavery (under a thin disguise) legal, and the wretched lot of the hemp labourers stands out in glaring contrast to the opulence of their masters, the owners of the plantations.

"Peonage" (a system of forced service for debt), which is the rule for the great mass of the workers, is indistinguishable from actual chattel slavery. Besides Yaqui Indians and Chinese, more than 100,000 native Mayas, former owners of the land, are labouring for some 50 henequen "kings," who practically control the Peninsula, and who live in costly palaces in the beautiful modern city of Merida, about 1,000 miles directly south of New Orleans, and reap huge profits as the result of this iniquitous system of cheap labour.

Called by polite planters the "people," and more intimately referred to as slaves, strangers hear them described as performing service for debt. Neither bought or sold, being indebted to their owners they are transferred on the basis of the market price of a man, as land or cattle is valued, and the prevailing price is four hundred Mexican dollars (£40) apiece. The problem of recruitment is not difficult; by trading on their needs the poorer classes are easily ensnared, and once a debt is contracted, the amount of which

matters little, the market price of a labourer is demanded to free the victim. Even a defender of the planters who wrote to a Massachusetts paper taking strong exception to Mr. Turner's article in *The American Magazine*, admitted that the system of indebted labour is "bad in theory and worse in practice." "The indebted servant," he wrote, "is held more or less strictly to the terms of the verbal and implied contract according to the personal equation of the planter or his representative."

The money lending slave-brokers conduct their business quietly. The writer of the article was offered slaves in lots to use as he wished, men, women and children, the police being ready to protect rights of ownership. They may be used on the plantations, as personal servants, as domestic drudges and worse, and are ill-fed, unpaid and whipped, and a high death-rate prevails amongst them.

"I heard," the author says, "numerous stories of slaves being beaten to death, but I never heard of an instance in which the murderer was punished, or even arrested. The police, the public prosecutors, and the judges know exactly what is expected of them, for the men who appoint them are the planters themselves."

Unhappily only a fraction of the ruling interests oppose a system which exists throughout Mexico.

In addition to the Maya natives, the Yaqui Indians of Sonora, who, if we may believe the writer of these articles, are being deliberately exterminated for the sake of their rich lands, are imported from that more northern country at the rate of 500 per month for debt and rebellion, the Government of Sonora receiving £13 a head for every Yaqui sold. It is said that two-thirds of the Yaquis die in Yucatan during their first year of servitude.

Still more terrible are the conditions in the tobacco plantations of the Valle Nacional, a remote and inaccessible gorge, shut in by mountains, which Mr. Turner describes as the worst slave-hole in Mexico, and probably in the world. The death-rate is "appalling"—fifteen thousand are said to be imported every year, most of them dying *within eight months*. The slaves, who are Mexicans, are called contract labourers, but none go of their own free-will; some, but not the majority, are convicts. The Government take an almost open share in the trade. The work is incessant, the food miserably inadequate, and the treatment abominable. The horror of the whole thing the writer of the article describes as "almost unbelievable."

The above is but a bare outline of the slavery described in the articles referred to, which are written in a sensational style, and the detailed horrors of the floggings and other callously cruel punishments inflicted on the contract labourers are purposely omitted.

The articles have caused a considerable amount of comment in the United States, but we have seen no contradiction of any authority; many

persons have written to the magazine corroborating the particulars of cruelty related. A Philadelphia newspaper, the *Press*, says :—

"The explicit charges brought against Mexico by J. K. Turner in *The American Magazine* are either false or true. If false, Mr. Turner should be made to suffer a penalty of publicity proportionate to the defamation he has occasioned to our sister Republic ; if true, the civilised world must amend its opinion of the Diaz Government and condemn its brutal tyranny with oathings."

In the February number of the same magazine, Mr. Herman Whitaker, an Englishman, writes of the Rubber Slavery of the Mexican tropics, in which after showing up the rubber plantations of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec on their economic side, he turns to the humanitarian aspect, and describes the contract labour system as being "undoubtedly the worst form of slavery this world has ever seen." The "fraud and misrepresentation," which the writer found to characterise the working of the rubber companies, "dwindle," he says, "into insignificance by contrast" with the wrongs done to the *enganchados* or indentured labourers employed. Tricked at every turn, worked from dawn to dark in a tropical sun, more than half-starved, and cruelly flogged for little or no cause, the wretched peon or debt-slave leads a life of torture, from which, in a majority of cases, he is released only by death. The labourers are tightly packed at night into huts or cages, "under lock and key, without privacy, sanitary accommodations, or provision for ablutions." Disease is said to be the rule rather than the exception, and "every night a full third of the field force would report sick." In one case of a dying man, whom the writer examined and found incurable, he heard the planter order him to work in order to "get out the last that's in," and having fallen in the field exhausted, the victim was actually beaten to death. The lot of the women and children is even harder than that of the men. The overseers are forced by their employers to work their human instruments with brutal disregard of humanity, and the Mexican Government has made no attempt to establish law and order in the jungle country. The American planter, usually shocked at first at the brutalities of the system, "after a few years' blunting," accepts them as necessary.

Mr. Whitaker maintains that if American public opinion is made aware of these abuses they can be brought to an end, first by the intervention of those financially interested in the rubber plantations, and secondly by reaction upon Mexican public opinion, which is very sensitive to the opinion of other nations.

"For a general confirmation of the abuses set forth in these articles we may refer to a book published in London last year, entitled *The American Egypt*," which is said to be the first book ever written by

* *The American Egypt*. By C. Arnold and F. G. T. Frost. Hutchinson & Co.

Englishmen on Yucatan. The volume forms a very interesting record of travel in that little-known country, and while the main objects of the journey appear to have been archæological and ethnological, the writers give a very vivid picture of the social and political condition of Mexico, and of the misgovernment and oppression which prevail. The civilisation of Mexico, though ostentatious, is superficial; the Government, nominally a Republic, is an autocracy under Porfirio Diaz, who is more relentless, more absolute, than any recent Tsar of Russia. Of the Mexicans in general, and the people of Yucatan in particular, the authors can find little that is good to say. The Yucatecs, broadly speaking, consist of two classes, slaves and savages. The latter are the half-caste Spanish Indians, sensual, indolent, cruel, and avaricious in the extreme. The slaves are the natives who, though broken and degraded by centuries of tyranny, are still a kindly and hospitable people, but the whole race has been "forcibly prostituted to the avarice and lasciviousness of an upstart people, trespassers in the land." The story of the Spanish domination of the whole of Yucatan is described as "a story of bloodshed, of basest cruelty, of the most hideous lust." A special chapter is devoted to the plantation slavery—"as black a story of slavery as the world has ever known." The peonage system of labour for debt is as treacherous and specious a plan as was ever devised for race degradation, "and nothing could lend itself better to the blackest abuses."

"In Yucatan every Indian peon is in debt to his Yucatecan master . . . because the master's interest is to get him and keep him in debt. . . . Struggle as he may, he will never escape the cruel master who under law, as at present administered in Yucatan, has as complete disposal of his body as one of the pigs which root around in the hacienda yard."

The labourers are valuable, and a "network of regulations and laws" is accordingly in force on all the haciendas to keep them. They are in truth nothing but cattle, and absolutely the property of their masters, who traffic in slaves at their own free will.

The henequen millionaires, who are so wealthy that they hardly know what to do with their money, govern the country, and they are banded together to deny all justice to the Indians, who are treated worse than dogs. At the same time they are very sensitive on the subject of slavery, and when President Diaz recently visited Merida they strained every nerve and spent huge sums to hide the real condition of things on the plantations, of which ugly rumours were current, beneath costly decorations and triumphal arches. The plantations were hastily made to assume an air of prosperity and contentment, and the President was entertained with a round of sumptuous feasts.

This was referred to in a very frank letter which the authors addressed to President Diaz on their return from Mexico, and to which they received no answer. The following is an extract:—

to have " Last, but not least, so-called civilised Yucatan is rotten with a foul slavery, the blacker because of its hypocrisy and pretence. We have gathered facts which make truly a sad story. The girls and women on the haciendas are treated like cattle, a prey to the terrible lusts of the hacendados and their sons; Indian workmen are flogged, even to death, and in one case which came to our knowledge those who attempted to expose such foul murder were put into Merida prison without trial, and, as we are informed, are still there. For the Indian there is no justice, and at his expense the great henequen growers daily increase their millions, some of which they lavishly used in their attempts to hide from Your Excellency the utter rottenness and degradation of Yucatan's social system. If Your Excellency desires particulars we shall gladly give ourselves the honour of sending names and details."

North-West Rhodesia.

THE Society has received from a trader in North-West Rhodesia charges of brutal ill-treatment of the natives of a certain district by a Native Commissioner, and also of boys being taken off by the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau to work against their will. These charges were submitted to the Acting Administrator at Livingstone last year and, subsequently, to the High Commissioner, and, as a result, an enquiry was held in June last, which lasted three months, when a great number of witnesses were examined. The complainant was informed in December that, after fully and carefully considering the report of the Commissioner who was appointed to hold the enquiry, Lord Selborne was satisfied that no complaints against the Native Commissioner were established for two years, and that the state of affairs during that period had been satisfactory. The complainant, however, submits that the conclusion reached is not supported by the evidence.

The Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society communicated with the British South Africa Company, and the Secretary obtained an interview with two of the Directors and the Acting Administrator, who was then in London, when he informed them of the statements and correspondence received by the Society. On behalf of the Company it is held that the native evidence taken at the enquiry showed that the complaints all came from a small section of malcontents and revealed no real abuses.

The Society proposes to follow up the matter, and is making further enquiry.

"Unrest" in Southern Nigeria.

HALF-A-CENTURY ago the Lagos territory was ceded to the Crown, and during the whole of that period none have challenged the loyalty of its people. It is asserted that during those fifty years no single seditious act

has been registered against its law-abiding tribes; yet the Governor proposes to signalise that Jubilee by placing upon the Statute book a "Sedition Ordinance" of almost infinite scope. The "unrest" is merely alleged—no justification of the charge is forthcoming; at the same time, however, an ever-increasing criticism has been passed by the native tax-payers upon certain acts for which Sir Walter Egerton is more or less responsible—the railway, the race-course removals, and the church.

In the building of railways it is perhaps inevitable that there should be a certain wastage of public funds; not only has this been exceptional in Nigeria, but the culpable parties have apparently been shielded from justice.

What is known as the race-course expropriation has caused much resentment amongst the Lagos people, and a local tax-payer criticises the action in the following terms:—

"Sir Walter Egerton needs to be reminded of a certain incident promoted by himself not so very long ago. When sometime last year he was making the wholesale expropriation of the vast area near the race-course, compelling hundreds, even thousands, of natives to quit the homes and hearths which had become endeared to them by the associations of a considerable number of years, and obliging numbers to wander about the country homeless for many a day, . . . he presumed there would be a rising, . . . the troops were called under arms . . . but the people simply smiled at the folly of the idea. Even then had any emergency arisen the reading of the Riot Act would have been sufficient."

The third and most recent action against which local criticism has been levelled is the creation of an Established Church. The first definite proposal was made in 1905, and was limited to the simple request for £100 grant-in-aid toward the support of a Church Missionary. To-day we are informed that Lord Crewe has provisionally agreed to an annual grant-in-aid of a minimum sum of £480, and £5,000 towards the erection of a new church. The native tax-payer points to the existence of some twenty churches already in Lagos, and asks why he should be called upon to find the money for a fourth in which "whites are to have the preference."

It is beyond question that the "Sedition Ordinance" has been introduced with the object of stifling criticisms.

Sedition there is none; unswerving loyalty is everywhere apparent. The Attorney-General, for example, when introducing the Bill, said: "I know the Yoruba people very well, but I do not know whether the people of the Eastern Central Provinces are as loyal as the Yorubas." Yet the Attorney-General had fifty years of clear history to guide him!

The Governor, who followed the Attorney-General, stated:—

"I am quite sure myself that there will be no charge of sedition against any of the illiterate Yoruba people of this country, except such as they may be incited by other people to commit."

The Hon. Sapara Williams, in moving the rejection of the Bill, very truly urged that—

“Sedition is a thing incompatible with the character of the Yoruba people, and has no place in their constitution.”

The Ordinance itself is all too familiar now, for it has been taken almost bodily from the India Office. Clause 3 reads:—

“Whoever by words either spoken or written or by signs or by visible representation or otherwise brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt or excites or attempts to excite disaffection, disloyalty, or feelings of enmity towards His Majesty or the Government established by law in Southern Nigeria shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to two years or with fine or with both imprisonment and fine.”

And Clause 4—

“Whoever by word either spoken or written or by signs or by visible representation or otherwise promotes or attempts to promote feelings of enmity between different classes of the population of Southern Nigeria shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to two years or with fine or with both imprisonment and fine.”

Any African student will immediately recognise the illimitable scope of the Act amongst the more or less primitive folk of Southern Nigeria. As the Hon. Sapara Williams says: “Hyper-sensitive officials may come to-morrow who will see sedition in every criticism, and crime in every mass meeting.” We must bear in mind that very few amongst the official classes of West Africa speak the language of the people, of whose lives “signs and symbols” are the constant accompaniments:—“signs and symbols” which, after studies ranging over a quarter of a century, men like Dennett and Nassau confess they are only beginning to understand. Yet even the most innocuous of these may be interpreted by the malaria-stricken official as an offence within the meaning of the Sedition Ordinance.

Against this Sedition Ordinance a perfectly orderly mass meeting of 6,000 natives met to protest, when the Senior White Cap Chief Ojora made a speech, in language of the most moderate but picturesque native eloquence, and declared that “such a law as the Seditious Offences Ordinance would open the floodgates of intrigue by evil-disposed persons to degrade and demoralise the country.”

It is fortunately not too late for Sir Walter Egerton to signalise the termination of his office by adding to the services he has already rendered to Southern Nigeria by refraining from the last definite step of placing this Ordinance upon the Statute book. In any case Lord Crewe would fitly commemorate the forthcoming Jubilee by withholding the operation of such Ordinance until justification was definitely established.

Questions have been put in the House of Commons, in reply to which Colonel Seely maintains that this unfortunate Ordinance simply codifies the existing law.

Forced Labour in Uganda.

INFORMATION has been received from Bishop Tucker, of Uganda, pointing to an unsatisfactory state of things as regards the demand for compulsory native labour in the Protectorate. According to a Parliamentary Return on the subject of Compulsory Native Labour in British Possessions, issued by the Colonial Office in 1908, "the only labour in Uganda which could in any way be regarded as compulsory is that employed by the native chiefs, in the terms of the Uganda Agreement, 1900, for the maintenance in good repair of main public roads." For such service all natives are liable to be called on by their chiefs during one month in each year, if necessary; but they are employed in their own districts, and "no restrictions are placed upon their individual liberty at times other than that when they are engaged in their ordinary daily work." The labour is apparently not remunerated.

It is clear that while such a system is capable of defence, it may easily be abused, if not carefully kept within strict limits, and this appears to have been the case in Uganda, where we learn from the Bishop that thousands of men have been withdrawn from the cultivation of their *shambas* for employment in public works—road-making, etc.—and also for the forced cultivation of cotton and other produce. The people having been thus obliged to neglect the tilling of their own plantations, a scarcity of food has resulted, and owing to this and other causes, the Busoga country has become seriously depopulated.

The Bishop gives an illustration of the confusion which arises as to the real nature of "voluntary labour."

"Recently," he wrote, "a road was needed in Bunyoro. The Governor explained the need to the chiefs, and they at once volunteered to make the road. Thousands of men were employed on the road, but they were all forced labourers. The only volunteers were the chiefs, who did not a single stroke of the work. When I complained to the Governor, he said, 'Oh! it was quite voluntary labour.'"

The Bishop was apprehensive that if certain schemes for railway construction in Uganda, which, he believed, had been sanctioned, were carried out, a similarly delusive kind of "voluntary" labour might be resorted to. A letter was accordingly addressed to the Colonial Office, to which the following reply was received:—

DOWNING STREET,

4th January, 1910.

SIR,—I am directed by the Earl of Crewe to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st of December, and to state for the information of the Committee of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, that no scheme for the construction of railways in Uganda has been definitely sanctioned by his Majesty's Government, but that, if and when this is done,

your Committee may rest assured that the labour employed will be strictly voluntary.

I am, &c.,

(Signed) G. V. FIDDES.

To the Secretary,

Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society.

The danger of calling out such labour, even for works of public benefit, was present to the mind of Sir F. Lugard in the early days of the Protectorate, for we find that, commenting on a stipulation in his treaty with Mwanga in 1892, that the latter should supply labour for public works, roads, etc., he describes the clause, which was inserted at the suggestion of a high official at the coast, as being one "of which advantage should very sparingly be taken."

"Such labour," he wrote,* "would be forced labour, and . . . it would probably be difficult to enforce. . . Chiefs in control of provinces might be held responsible for the repair of the roads and bridges in their province. This would be feasible, for they would merely transmit the order to subordinate chiefs, and ultimately it would devolve upon the dwellers near a road to keep the portion in repair near to their estates; but as an asset to Government the requisition of labour cannot be set down, nor of course, would British rule tolerate anything like forced labour."

Slave Trade in Egypt.

WE referred in our last issue, under the above heading, to a recent report from the Italian Anti-Slavery Society, that of the slaves sent in the caravans from Wadai to Koufra and the north, some are sent, by way of Siva, to Egypt, others (the majority) being taken to Tripoli and Barca. We are assured from Italy that this information was exact.

Not unnaturally, we connected this statement with an announcement in the newspapers that the Egyptian Government had, in November last, sent out a punitive expedition to Siva to seize rifles and slaves, and a letter was addressed to the Foreign Office, calling attention to the report, and asking that inquiries might be made. We are glad to learn from the following official reply that the slaves do not reach Egypt by way of Siva, and that the existence of slavery in the latter locality is denied :—

FOREIGN OFFICE,

February 4th, 1910.

Re EGYPT.

SIR,—With reference to my letter of December 17th last respecting

* *The Rise of Our East African Empire.* By Captain F. D. Lugard. Vol. II., p. 649.

the slave trade between Tripoli and Egypt by way of Siva, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey, to state that he has received a despatch from his Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Cairo on the subject.

Sir E. Gorst reports that there is no foundation for the rumour that slaves are being brought into Egypt by way of Siva. In the recent affair at Siva, Osman Habboun was said to be in possession of a considerable supply of arms, and also of some slaves, but when his house was searched no slaves were found.

Sir E. Gorst adds that it is denied that slavery exists in that locality.

I am, etc.,

W. LANGLEY.

The Secretary,

The Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society.

Slave Trading in the Central Sudan.

THE last Journal of the Anti-Slavery Society of France gives some additional particulars about the occupation of Wadai by French troops and the taking of the capital, Abecher, which it is said "assures for France the possession of a country which appears suitable for the culture of cereals and for cattle breeding, the prosperity of which has thus far been retarded only by the deplorable native administration; moreover, by breaking the unity of a Power which constituted a permanent danger for our troops in the Chad, the operations of the 1st of June allow us to apply ourselves profitably to the improvement of this country."

The occupation of Wadai last year is said to have been accomplished by "a forcible blow, a raid of extreme daring," and the result will be one of extreme importance, in the opinion of the Society, for the suppression of slavery.

The following remarks are interesting:—

"We cannot forget that since the resolution presented to our general meeting by M. Bonet Maury, on the 28th June, 1907, giving information on the authority of Captain Georges Mangin, as to the slavery practices of the Senussi in Wadai and Darfour, the Anti-Slavery Society has not ceased to ask the Colonial Office for the effective occupation of Abecher, particularly after the Congress held in Rome from the 3rd to 5th December, 1907. On the 27th January, 1908, we wrote to the Colonial and Foreign Ministers, to the effect that El Fachier, in the Anglo-Egyptian territory, as well as Abecher, in the French territory, had been indicated to us as starting places for the caravans of slaves, purporting to convey pilgrims, which advance thence on to the frontiers common to the two countries,

stopping at the oasis of Koufra and penetrating generally to Barca, either to Tobrouk or Solloun."

In February, however, a disastrous reverse to a French force in the country was reported. A reconnaissance under Captain Fiegenschuh was attacked by an ambushed force three days to the south-east of Abecher, when all the officers and most of the 109 men of the force were killed. The column had gone out in response to a friendly letter from the Sultan of Tzedin, who probably wanted to pay off old scores against the representative of civilization, who interfered with his slave-raiding practices. The number of French troops in Wadai was small, but have no doubt been reinforced.

The following extract from a paper on "The French Mission to Lake Chad," read by Captain J. Tilho before the Royal Geographical Society, on the 21st February, will be read with satisfaction, as forcibly expressing the need of thorough co-operation between the European Powers for the suppression of African slavery:—

"The friendly delimitations of colonial frontiers which had been made in recent years would prepare the way to a more complete understanding between the nations interested in Central and Equatorial Africa. The co-operation of the administrations of the various colonies would be the most powerful means, and most probably the only means, of utterly destroying the scourge of slavery. During their journey across Nigeria they heard the opinion expressed that if the slave trade was still flourishing around Lake Chad the fault was chiefly that of the Germans and the French, because these nations did not repress the evil with sufficient energy. They could repudiate such a supposition as far as France was concerned, and, no doubt, Germany might do the same. Everywhere, where civil or military administration had been established by France, the slave-trade had completely disappeared. At present it existed only in the countries which had until now escaped the action of the French as well as of the English in the proximity of the frontier line which divided the regions of the Chad from the regions of the Nile. It was specially with England and France that the duty lay of suppressing slavery in the regions within their zones of protection, but to obtain that result two paramount conditions were absolutely necessary—a thorough co-operation in the means of working towards that aim between England and France and also Germany, and the effective occupation as soon as possible of the respective British and French territories lying between Lake Chad and the Nile."

Reported Slave Trading at Zanzibar.

Not long since, according to the *East African Standard*, a case of slave raiding was reported from Zanzibar. Five native boys, aged from 8 to 22 years, were persuaded by a couple of Zanzibaris to go with them to Bububu.

At sundown they started walking homewards, and one of the Zanzibaris suggested they should return by water. A small boat was found conveniently vacant, which the party boarded, but the boys' suspicions were aroused as it was put out to sea instead of continuing along the coast. An Arab dhow presently overtook them, with a crew of five Muscat Arabs, and, the natives having been transhipped into it, it set sail for Muscat, while the Zanzibaris returned to their homes. As the dhow passed Mombasa, on the mainland, a storm sprang up; the frightened crew ran their boat on to the beach and, when they realised the difficulties of getting her afloat again before the next tide, they decamped, fearing their illicit traffic might be discovered. The kidnapped natives were exhorted not to leave the dhow until their captors' return. After some time the boys determined to face the risks of flight, and set off for Mombasa, where they were duly cared for by the authorities.

Morocco Slave Dealing.

WE have received some information regarding the trade in slaves who are brought into Morocco, which we may hope will be checked by the recent fighting that has been going on in Mauretania. The French Anti-Slavery Society believes that these progressive operations will do much to pacify that country. The district of Adrar lies to the north-west of French West Africa, and it is thought that the action of the French troops will have a reflex influence on the French prestige in Morocco. A correspondent in Morocco tells us that in the great autumn market of Sous, held every year, there has been a large supply of slaves for sale, men, women, and children of both sexes. This supply comes from Mauretania, the slaves being brought by the well-known dealer (who is described as a sort of prophet), Ma-el-Ainin, who, with his people, supplies slaves for Morocco and Tripoli. Our correspondent expresses the hope that since Atar, the chief town, and Shanguitt (or Chinguetti), in Mauretania, have been taken by the French, slavery will cease in that region. It is said that this slave dealer has bought slaves who have been raided from as far south as the Niger, Ivory Coast, Gold Coast, etc., for sale at Adrar, and from thence to be taken to Wad-Smara in the desert, to supply the Sous market, which is held twice a year.

The Convict-Lease System in America.

WE have previously called attention to the terrible abuses connected with the treatment of convicts in the State of Texas, and to the investigation of the alleged peonage cases, which has been conducted by the United States Government.

The Legislative Committee, which was appointed to investigate the prison system of Texas, issued its report at the end of last year. The report is a long one, and recommends reforms of a somewhat sweeping character. The Committee is in favour of drastic action to remedy the present system. In the letter covering the report the Committee declared that public opinion was now so awakened to the necessity of an immediate change in the system, that legislation could be promptly enacted along proper lines, and a special session of the Legislature was demanded to act upon the Committee's recommendations. The report states that the rules have been grossly neglected, barbarous punishments have been inflicted, the management of many farms, both State and contract, is unsatisfactory, and the sanitary conditions are of a revolting character. The Committee recommend that the contract and labour-share-farm system shall be abolished not later than January 1st, 1912, and that all convicts shall be kept and worked within the walls or upon farms owned by the State.

There are two minority reports, signed respectively by two and one of the members of the Investigation Committee, in both of which the entire abolition of the lash is strongly recommended, and, in the latter, the State Railroad Camp is stigmatised as a miniature "Hole of Calcutta."

In Georgia, also, public opinion has been roused against the conditions of the City stockade, where a Prison Committee has been conducting what has been described as the most sensational investigation which has stirred Atlanta for years, and this in spite of the legislation of last year, abolishing the convict-lease system as from April 1st, when the leased-out convicts were transferred from private stockades to work on the public roads in their respective counties.

It was reported from Atlanta that persons are often sent to this stockade on account of inability to pay a money fine for misdemeanours.

The *Washington Times* wrote:—

"This testimony reveals the fact that in the heart of a community where many humanitarian and Christian influences are at work for the uplift of humanity there have existed in the city stockade wrongs and cruelties which surpass those inflicted in the torture chamber of medieval days."

Many clergy and ministers of Atlanta have taken up the work of prison reform, and are fighting the battle against the cruelties disclosed.

Review.

"FIGHTING THE SLAVE HUNTERS IN CENTRAL AFRICA."

By ALFRED J. SWANN.*

THE author of this book, who has spent twenty-seven years in Africa, spoke at a meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society as long ago as May, 1888, and has since that date been occasionally in correspondence with the Society.

Mr. Swann first went out to Central Africa in May, 1882, in connection with the London Missionary Society, as second in command of the expedition to Lake Tanganyika with Captain Hore, to put together a steamship which the London Missionary Society was then sending out, and to organise a mail service on the lake. Mr. Swann has extensive experience of African natives, and his book is a record of adventure of a very readable kind. From the beginning the author was fired with anti-slavery zeal, and he records in these pages the valuable work which has been achieved.

The conditions of East Africa a quarter of a century ago were very different, as Sir Harry Johnston reminds us in the introduction which he has furnished, from those of to-day, and Mr. Swann has had a considerable part in curbing the Arab slave trade round the shores of Tanganyika, and in improving the condition of the natives.

"Lakes Nyasa, Tanganyika, and Victoria Nyanza," writes Mr. Swann, "were in the hands of Arab and native slave traders, and beyond a patrol—admittedly unsatisfactory—of portions of the East Coast, nothing much was being done to crush the accursed traffic which was eating out the heart of Africa."

It is the author's honourable boast that for twenty-six years he took part in the determined efforts made to suppress the slave trade, and the changes which have been effected may well serve as an encouragement to opponents of slavery to persevere in their efforts.

Not very long after his arrival in Africa, Mr. Swann got a glimpse of the actualities of the slave traffic, when, at a halting place 200 miles from the coast, he met the "annual caravan" of the notorious Tippu Tib on its march to the coast. In conversation with the head men in charge, he learnt that numbers of the slaves had already died from hunger on the journey.

"What do you do," asked Mr. Swann, "when they become too ill to travel?"

"Spear them at once!" was the fiendish reply. "For, if we did not,

* London: Seeley & Co., Limited.

others would pretend they were ill in order to avoid carrying their loads. No! we never leave them alive on the roads; they all know our custom.'

" 'I see women carrying not only a child on their backs, but, in addition, a tusk of ivory or other burden on their head. What do you do in their case when they become too weak to carry both child and ivory? Who carries the ivory?'

" 'She does. We cannot leave valuable ivory on the road. *We spear the child and make her burden lighter.* Ivory first, child afterwards!'

" 'For downright savagery, this beat anything I had met with.'

The headquarters of Tippu Tib and his partner in the slave trade, Rumliza, were at Ujiji, on the east coast of the lake, and Mr. Swann gives a thrilling account of an interview which he had with the great slave trader. Tippu Tib was indignant with Europe for interfering with his business and requiring his presence at Zanzibar, when he claimed that he had helped European travellers on more than one occasion and had saved their lives. He foresaw that the white man was come to "eat up" his possessions, and was very angry. Mr. Swann assured him that Europe had sickened of his slave operations and was determined to stop them. But his final judgment on the great slave trader is somewhat more lenient than might have been expected. He often visited him when the Arab was living in retirement at Zanzibar, and he thus writes of the services which he rendered to European explorers:—

"It would perhaps have been putting into practice that justice which I never ceased to hold before him as our standard if, when he died, some of our great geographical societies in Europe had acknowledged how much they were indebted to Tippu Tib for allowing explorers to travel where he was in power, collecting valuable scientific data. As it was, all I have noticed was the announcement of the death of that 'notorious slaver.'"

Mr. Swann is not blind to the difficulties which the abolition of slavery often introduces; the re-establishment of order out of chaos and the building up of a healthier and better race is no easy task. Freedom, he says, in many instances sets whole families at variance, and a gradual transition from slavery is, he holds, better than its abolition by a stroke of the pen. Now, however, the African rising generation has begun to feel slavery to be a disgrace instead of a misfortune, and in this change lies, in Mr. Swann's opinion, the germ of a social revolution.

An interesting chapter deals with the wonderful industrial development which has taken place in Central Africa. Tens of thousands of natives have thrown away many of their old customs and are honestly trying to live upright lives. Most Nyasaland villages have come under the influence of Christian missions, and Mr. Swann reminds us of the noble courage and the full persistence of purpose which modern missionaries in Africa have shown.

In another chapter he deals with some of the traits of native character, and on the whole he thinks well of the natives for honesty, family attachment, and cheery contentment.

Very much still remains to be done amongst the races of Africa, and the urgency of the demand for labour makes it more important than ever to maintain a high ideal of justice and freedom in dealings between blacks and whites, and a constant vigilance against methods of exploiting the native races which are a renewal of the old slavery in a new and more dangerous form, because they are employed in the name of "civilization."

The Society's Organisation.

LETTER FROM MR. AND MRS. HARRIS.

OUR readers are aware that the Rev. and Mrs. J. H. Harris, whose names are so well known for the immense services which they have rendered to the Congo Reform Association throughout the country, and indeed to the cause of native African races generally, have accepted the invitation of the Committee of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society to undertake organising work on behalf of that Society, and their connection with it has now begun.

Mr. and Mrs. Harris ask us to publish the following letter which they address

TO THE SUPPORTERS OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY AND ABORIGINES
PROTECTION SOCIETY.

DEAR SIR OR MADAM,—A concurrence of circumstances has guided your Committee to offer and us to accept an invitation to undertake the organisation and extension, by public advocacy, of the work you have for so long maintained on behalf of subject races. There probably was never a time when a forward movement was more eloquently demanded.

It is an insistent and clamant call for pity and succour which comes from the rubber forests of the Congo and Peru; an appeal for liberation from the abject slavery of the cocoa plantations of San Thomé and Principe; a call for advice and help in the defence of liberty upon the Guinea Coast and hinterland.

Never was the voice of public opinion so powerful as it is to-day; it wins victories whilst fleets of "Dreadnoughts" are only advertising their timidity and powerlessness. May we, therefore, in taking up this work, appeal to you for assistance in the creation and sustaining of an ever-increasing public opinion?

The Society is particularly anxious to create local Committees in different parts of the Kingdom, and your initiative and co-operation are earnestly solicited. Those who are willing to organise public meetings, drawing room gatherings and garden parties, with this object in view, are requested to communicate, in the first instance, with the President, Sir T. Fowell Buxton, Bart., at the office of the Society.

We are,

Your obedient Servants,

JOHN H. HARRIS.

ALICE SEELEY HARRIS.



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The Anti-Slavery & Aborigines Protection Society.

THE FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OF THE UNITED SOCIETY

WILL BE HELD AT THE

Westminster Palace Hotel,

VICTORIA STREET, S.W.,

on Tuesday, April 26th, 1910,

at 3.30 p.m.

Chairman:

SIR T. FOWELL BUXTON, Bart., G.C.M.G.

(President.)

SPEAKERS as at present arranged:—

The Lord Bishop of Hereford. The Lord Bishop of Birmingham.

Rt. Hon. the Earl of Mayo. Rt. Hon. Lord Monkswell.

Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Dilke, Bart., M.P.

Mr. J. St. Loe Strachey.

Mr. Joseph Burt.

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